IPHIGENIA IN AVLIS, 1510–1531

BY

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In the course of discussing a line in the messenger's speech of the *IA*, Porson declared that the whole of the last scene (from line 1532, as numbered in modern texts) was spurious, and had to be ascribed to a writer who flourished at some unknown date, but certainly later than the time of Aelian (Supplement to his preface to *Hecuba*, 2nd ed. [1829] 18). With that judgment no one will quarrel. It may, however, be questioned whether Kirchhoff (ed. of 1855) was right to deny Euripidean authorship also to the choral passage 1510–1531.

The passage is sung, evidently, in response to Iphigenia's invitation to the women to join her in extolling Artemis (1491ff.). By the time that the chorus begin their song, Iphigenia has of course left the stage; but they are with her in spirit as they envisage the sacrifice taking place.

When the authorship of lines 1510–1531 is under consideration, it may be worth remarking that the performance of a choral song at the instance of one of the characters is thoroughly Euripidean. For example in the *Alcestis* Admetus requests the chorus to attend the funeral-train and, while they are awaiting its appearance, to sing to the god below (423–424); they comply with an ode in praise of Alcestis (435–475). A closer parallel still to our passage is found at *IT* 143–202. There too Iphigenia is given a lyric passage in which she invites the chorus to utter sentiments similar to her own. This they do, using the significant expression ἀντιψάλμους ᾠδάς, that is, 'a responsive song' (179). Not only is the song of the chorus 'responsive' but, as in the passage of the *IA* now under discussion, the chorus re-employ some of the terminology already used by Iphigenia. Thus Iphigenia's μολπᾶς (146) is taken up by the τὰν ἐν μολπαῖς of the chorus (183); her φεῦ φεῦ τῶν Ἄργει μόχθων (155) by their μόχθος δ'ἐκ μόχθων ᾄσσει (191); her ἰὼ δαῖμον (156) by their σπεύδει δ'ἀσπούδαστ' ἐπὶ σοὶ δαίμων (201–202); her οὐκ εἰσ' οἶκοι πατρῷοι (152) by their οἴμοι πατρῴων οἴκων (187–188).

In the *IA*, the repetitions are even more remarkable, extending to the recurrence of entire phrases:

τὰν Ἰλίου καὶ Φρυγῶν ἑλέπτολιν	1475–1476	∼ 1511
χερνίβων τε παγάς	1479	∼ 1513
ὦ πότνια πότνια	1488	∼ 1524 (Hermann)

Furthermore, the title τὰν ἄνασσαν Ἄρτεμιν (1482) has generated the θεῶν ἄνασσαν of the chorus (1523), an expression which is difficult to justify on other grounds.

I append some comments on matters of detail in the choral song.

1513. Should Hartung's βαλουμέναν be preferred to βαλλομέναν (LP)? The latter is easy to defend on the ground that the chorus are meant to visualize what is actually taking place at the sacrifice. On the other hand, it may be only the *movement* (στείχουσαν) which the chorus see in their mind's eye; in that case, βαλουμέναν (and also χρανοῦσαν, if that is rightly read in 1516) still lie in the future, from the point of view of the chorus. One may recall that in the great ode of the *Bacchae* 977–1023 the chorus imagine themselves out on the mountain, inciting the hounds against the unbeliever. There, the imperatives ἴτε and ἀνοιστρήσατε, both referring to present time, are succeeded by a vision of what is going to happen; and that vision is expressed by the futures ὄψεται (983) and ἀπύσει (984).

1514. Nothing should be altered. γε marks an exclamation of shocked surprise on the part of the chorus that Artemis requires such an offering at her altar: cf. θύμασιν βροτησίοις χαρεῖσα (1524–1525). δαίμονος too is essential. The point is that Artemis is the tutelary goddess of the place, not just any goddess, who has called for the offering; and, in that capacity, she has the power to grant or withhold permission for the Greeks to sail.

1523. As already suggested, the phrase θεῶν ἄνασσαν has arisen from the τὰν ἄνασσαν Ἄρτεμιν of line 1482. The fact remains that Artemis was not the queen of the gods; and neither Euripides nor an interpolator would have called her such. Perhaps the author meant, rather, 'queen among goddesses', having in mind the Homeric locution δῖα θεάων, 'radiant among goddesses'.

1522–1525. After κλήσωμεν (better κλῃΐσωμεν Schroeder), strict sequence would demand the subjunctive πέμψῃ. The imperative πέμψον is introduced by anacoluthon, perhaps facilitated by the use in tragedy of the phrase οἶσθ' οὖν ὃ δρᾶσον, where likewise an aorist imperative is used illogically.

1527. Nothing should be altered. The change from iambic to aeolic movement naturally entails a preponderance of double-short rhythm. The epic form δολόεντα causes no surprise in this environment. δολόεντα is applied in θ 281 to the magic bonds with which Hephaestus tied Ares and Aphrodite. Is the δολόεντα in our passage no more than an epic reminiscence, or are we perhaps meant to catch a hint of Laomedon's fraud in refusing to pay Apollo and Poseidon for building the Τροΐας ἕδη?

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